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A SERIOUS ADDRESS TO Masters of Families, WITH FORMS OF FAMILY-PRAYER.

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The SECOND EDITION.

If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in Heaven give good things to them that ask him. JESUS.

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THE PREFACE.

THE great end of religion is a good life, and the higheſt happineſs of man in conſequence of it. Chriſt came to bleſs us in turning us away from our iniquities, and to purify to himſelf a peculiar people zealous of good works. The connection between virtue and happineſs is evident. Without the due government of our paſſions, and of our conduct, we can neither be truly happy in this life, nor in that which is to come. If, therefore, we be wiſe for ourſelves, and be chriſtians in deed, and in truth, and not in name only, we ſhall ceaſe to do evil and learn to do well. We ſhall be careful to diſcharge

the proper duty of every ſtation in which it ſhall pleaſe divine providence to place us. And if we have any concern for the welfare of others, we ſhall diligently exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, leſt any of us be hardened by the deceitfulneſs of ſin. We ſhall, as the apoſtle directs us, conſider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works.

This is the trueſt friendſhip, and it was in order to fulfil this duty, of *a friend*, as well as of *a miniſter*, that the following addreſs was drawn up, at firſt, for the uſe of one particular congregation, and afterwards made more public. Happy will the author think himſelf if it at all contribute to make ever ſo few perſons more attentive to their duty, in ſo important a relation, on which the virtue and happineſs of others, as well as of themſelves, ſo much depend.

That other perſons may have an opportunity of exerciſing the ſame kind of benevolence,

nevolence, the addreſs is purpoſely ſhort, and the forms of prayer ſubjoined to it few. By this means the price will not be conſiderable, and more perſons may be induced to buy it, and give it to poor families, where there may be a proſpect of its being uſeful.

The two firſt prayers are very ſhort, plain, and general, being intended for common and daily uſe. The third is the compoſition of my worthy friend the Rev. Mr. Turner of Wakefield. I think it excellent for a rich variety of ſentiment, and for propriety and force of expreſſion. It is conſiderably longer than either of the others, and therefore will, perhaps, be thought more proper for Sundays, when families have leiſure for longer exerciſes of devotion. The forms for *particular occaſions* may be uſed along with any of them, at the diſcretion of the perſon who conducts the ſervice.

To thoſe perſons who can afford to purchaſe books, I would recommend other *ſets of family prayers*, containing a greater variety of forms, out of which they may be more likely to ſelect ſuch as particularly ſuit their own circumſtances and turn of thinking. A ſufficient variety will be found in thoſe compoſed by Mr. Bourn, Mr. May, Dr. Leland and other miniſters in Dublin, and eſpecially a ſet lately publiſhed by the Rev. Mr. Enfield of Warrington.

It ſeems to me, that there is a great want of books of practical religion, free from ſuperſtitious notions, and recommending no ſuperſtitious practices. I earneſtly wiſh that ingenious and pious perſons would attend to this circumſtance. Theycannot employ their talents to better purpoſe than by enforcing, like our Saviour, the practice of genuine virtue and piety, and, at the ſame time, diſpelling that unnatural gloom and horror, which weak or wicked men have thrown over thoſe things,

things, which, though truly ſerious, are in themſelves ſo chearful and engaging. Treatiſes on theſe important ſubjects, reſpecting the ſupreme happineſs of man, both in the preſent and future world, could not fail to be acceptable and uſeful.

Had we ever ſo many books of this kind, there would always be ſufficient reaſon for publiſhing more. Old books will be neglected, and new ones, with no other recommendation but that of being new, will be bought and read. Beſides, while every mode of falſe religion is continually preſented to us in ſome new form or modification, ſhould not their effects be counteracted by the exhibition of truth and virtue, in all the variety of dreſs they will naturally and eaſily admit of.

N. B. *In thoſe occaſional forms in this work in which particular perſons are referred to, it will be eaſy for the perſon who reads them to change the words* ſervant, he, him, *or* his, *into* ſervants, ſhe, *or* her, they, their, *or* them, *as the occaſion may require; and they are printed in Italics, to make them the more eaſily diſtinguiſhed, and, thereby, leſs liable to occaſion any embarraſſment to the reader.*

A SERIOUS

A SERIOUS ADDRESS TO MASTERS of FAMILIES.

My Chriſtian Brethren,

I Take the liberty to addreſs you at this time, under the reſpectable character of maſters and heads of families; hoping that ſome good may be done by informing thoſe who are ignorant, and exhorting thoſe who are negligent, in the diſcharge of the important duties of that relation; and that no offence will be taken by thoſe who are not unattentive to them, if they be hereby reminded of their obligations.

Every family is a little ſociety within itſelf, and has a ſyſtem of government peculiar to itſelf, the laws and regulations of which are wholly in your own power. This is an authority which is, in its own nature (as far as the laws of our country permit it to extend) more abſolute than that of any civil government in the world can poſſibly be; and in the adminiſtration of it you are accountable to none but to God, and your own conſciences.

Be ſenſible, then, of the importance of your character and ſtation, and be ſolicitous to fulfil the proper duty of it. And as the only true guide to diſcover what the duty of your ſtation is, conſider what *good* you are capable of doing in it, and what are the moſt probable means of producing this good. For a *power* of doing good, and an *obligation* to do it are, in the eye of reaſon and religion, of exactly the ſame extent; and it cannot be conceived to be otherwiſe, under the moral govern-

ment

ment of God, who has given us all our powers for that, and no other purpoſe.

Think not, my brethren, that you have diſcharged your duty to you children and ſervants, when you have behaved towards them, and made proviſion for them in ſuch a manner as law, or equity (as it is commonly underſtood) requires of you. There are tranſgreſſions and neglects of duty, of which human judicatories can take no cognizance, and duties of indiſpenſable obligation in the ſight of God. Nay, theſe duties are of more importance, with reſpect to happineſs, and therefore of more indiſpenſable obligation, than many of thoſe of which men do take cognizance.

Yourſelves, and the members of your families, have not only bodies, which muſt be ſupplied with food and raiment, and other conveniences of this mortal life; but you have immortal ſouls, which muſt be happy or miſerable after death; and the diſcipline by which we are formed to

that

that temper, and trained to that conduct, which will enſure everlaſting happineſs, is exerciſed to the moſt advantage in family relations. The influence of a maſter of a family, in this reſpect, is of far more importance than that of a miniſter or magiſtrate. Your children and ſervants are always under your eye. You ſee all their behaviour; and therefore may, in general, check whatever is wrong and vicious in both, before it be fixed into a habit.

With reſpect to your children, nature has given you an uncontrolled authority over them, at a time when their minds are exceedingly pliable; ſo that it is in your power, almoſt, to mold them as you pleaſe. By all means then improve this advantage, which nature, and the God of nature gives you, to the beſt of purpoſes. Be particularly attentive to every ſtep that may lead to a moral habit. Teach them betimes their duty to God, and to their fellow creatures. Inſpire them with an abhorrence of profane

ſwear-

ſwearing, lying, and ſtealing. Encourage whatever you ſee, that is gentle, tender, and compaſſionate in their nature; and check every thing that may lead to cruelty, malice, and revenge.

This, in general, is no difficult, but an eaſy and pleaſant taſk, when your children are young, and their minds apt to receive new impreſſions. It requires, indeed, an uniform and ſteady conduct; and ſometimes a conſiderable degree of ſeverity may be neceſſary; but conſider, that if your authority be once loſt, your child may be undone. If you indulge or neglect your children, till bad habits are formed, there will be a time when it will be too late to do them any real ſervice, though you may earneſtly wiſh to do it; and divine providence is often awefully juſt, in permitting wicked children to be a curſe to their criminally indulgent parents.

Indeed

Indeed no pains you can take can abſolutely inſure ſucceſs; for notwithſtanding (to allude to our ſaviour's parable) you may ſow good ſeed, an enemy may ſow tares. Your children are ſubject to a variety of influences, of which no perſon, and more eſpecially a man of buſineſs, can be ſufficiently apprized; and the foundation you have been laying for their virtue and happineſs may be ſecretly undermined. But by proper attention, and the uſual bleſſing of God upon your good endeavours, this evil may, generally, be prevented. Solomon ſays, *Train up a child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*

But ſuppoſing the worſt that can happen, there is a great difference with reſpect to the peace of your own minds, between ſeeing your children turn out corrupt and vicious, notwithſtanding your beſt and moſt vigilant endeavours; and the ſame thing happening in conſequence of

of your manifeſt neglect. In the former caſe, you are diſappointed indeed, and greatly diſappointed; but ſtill you have the ſatisfaction to think that you have done your duty, and that you could do no more. In the latter caſe, nothing can alleviate your diſtreſs. If you have a juſt ſenſe of things, ſuch an event, brought on in ſuch a manner, muſt bring your grey hairs with ſorrow to the grave.

The virtuous and religious education of your children, beſides being the beſt method of providing for the peace and comfort of your own future lives, and the moſt important ſervice you can do for your beloved offſpring, is a duty which you owe to *God*, the father of their ſpirits, who hath, as it were, committed them to your care for their improvement; and, likewiſe, a debt you owe to *ſociety*, and the civil government under which you live, to the good laws, and wiſe adminiſtration of which you owe the peace

and

and ſecurity of your lives. If your children be well educated, they will be an honour and an advantage to your country; but except they be well principled, and have acquired good moral habits, they may prove the greateſt peſts to ſociety; and it might have been better for the world, if they, or their parents had never been born.

Think not, my brethren, that you have diſcharged your duty to your SERVANTS, when you have fulfilled the legal contracts you have entered into with them. The authority and influence which all maſters have over ſervants, and eſpecially domeſtic ſervants, as they give you a *power* of doing more, do, therefore, according to the general rule above laid down, include an *obligation* to do more. Be attentive, therefore, to check any irregularities you may ſee your ſervants running into. Allow of no methods of ſpending their time that are likely to lead them into bad company,

and

and make them contract bad habits. Take proper opportunities of diſcourſing with them about their moral conduct, and the conſequences of it. See that they attend ſome place of divine worſhip. If they can read, put good books into their hands, and let them want no means of improvement, in any kind of knowledge proper for their ſtation, that you can conveniently procure them.

When your ſervants ſee you thus attentive to them, and that you have their intereſt, their beſt intereſt, at heart, it is more probable that they will have your intereſt at heart, and ſerve you with more attachment and fidelity. The growing complaint, that ſervants have no care of their maſters intereſts, may have a variety of cauſes; but it appears to me, that one of them is the little attention that maſters pay to the intereſt, the morals, and the religious inſtruction of their ſervants. This laſt part of the duty of maſters is much eaſier to diſcharge, when the

ſervants

ſervants are of the ſame religious perſuaſion with themſelves. When the caſe is otherwiſe, ſervants who are at an age to judge for themſelves, will leſs bear to be adviſed in any thing that has the leaſt relation to religion. However, in this caſe, a great part of the duty above-mentioned may be diſcharged with the utmoſt ſtrictneſs, without ſeeming to impoſe, in the leaſt, in matters of religion.

I would obſerve in this place, that maſters of families have many opportunities of making uſeful reflections upon *particular occurrences*, and that they ought carefully to improve them; in order to give young perſons and ſervants a turn for thinking and reflecting themſelves. In this manner the probity, good character, and ſucceſs of ſome, and the profligacy, infamy, and ruin of others, of their neighbours and acquaintance, may be turned to good account. Moral inſtructions, thus exemplified, have a double force upon the mind. Alſo, by attending to particular events,

events, an habitual regard to God, both in gratitude for his mercies, and a fear of his judgments, may be moſt advantageouſly inculcated. In conſequence of frequent reflections of this kind, perſons may be taught to ſee the hand of God in every thing they obſerve or hear of, and ſo come to have *his fear at all times before their eyes*; and this great principle cannot fail to operate as a powerful motive to virtue, and a moſt effectual reſtraint againſt vice and wickedneſs.

In order to make your duty to your children and ſervants the eaſier, and more effectual, be careful, in the firſt place, to ſet them *a good example.* Let the ſtricteſt ſobriety accompany your chearfulneſs and good humour. Let condeſcenſion go hand in hand with authority. Let integrity, and the ſtricteſt honour, appear in all your dealings between man and man; and let it be ſeen, that you make conſcience of doing your duty to God, your father and maſter in heaven,

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at the ſame time that you require the duty of your children and ſervants to you, as their father and maſter on earth. This duty of *example* alone is more than a thouſand exhortations. Theſe can only be repeated occaſionally, whereas the other is ſeen, and has influence every day, and every hour of the day. This cannot fail to have the happieſt effect upon a family, and operate equally to your benefit, and that of all who are under your care.

Beſides this principal article, of good example, I ſhall only recommend to your attention two things, which have ſo good an effect with reſpect to the religious inſtruction, and improvement of your children and ſervants, in every thing that is virtuous and good, that I do not ſcruple to call them two important branches of family duty.

The firſt is CATECHISING; but as I have urged this in the preface to my ſmall

ſmall *Catechiſm*, I ſhall ſay nothing about it here.

The ſecond is FAMILY-PRAYER, which, I am afraid, is growing into neglect with ſome of the politer part of this age, who have ſeen or heard ſo much of the appearance of religion in former times, that they ſeem aſhamed to leave any trace by which it might be known, to their moſt intimate acquaintance, that they have any religion at all.

I do not pretend to produce any expreſs ſcripture authority for the obſervance of this duty. One of the excellencies of our religion conſiſts in the ſmall number of its poſitive inſtitutions. The obſervance of the *Lord's day*, for the purpoſe of religious worſhip, cannot be directly proved from the New Teſtament, but the moral and devotional tendency of the chriſtian religion is evident; and therefore we ought, of ourſelves, to adopt thoſe cuſtoms, which, without being ſuperſtitious,

perſtitious, do really tend to promote the purpoſes of virtue and devotion in our own minds, and the minds of others. And, in this rational view of things, the obſervance of family prayer ſeems to want no other recommendation.

"This practice," ſays the excellent Archbiſhop Tillotſon, "is ſo neceſſary to "keep alive, and maintain a ſenſe of God "and religion on the minds of men, that "where it is neglected, I cannot ſee how "any family can, in reaſon, be deemed "a family of chriſtians, or indeed to have "any religion at all." I do not join in all the ſeverity of this cenſure, but I think there is the greateſt reaſon in the remark which introduces it.

In a multiplicity of worldly affairs, we are certainly too apt to forget God, and the *one great buſineſs* on which we are ſent into this world; but we cannot help being reminded of it, if it be our cuſtom to aſſemble in families every day, to read ſome

uſeful

uſeful portion of ſcripture, and to join in an act of rational devotion, expreſſing the ſenſe we have of our dependence upon God, our maker and benefactor, our reliance upon his mercy, our confidence in his providence, and our reſignation to his will, in all the events of this tranſitory life, in which we are to be trained up for a better life after death.

This practice, my brethren, will naturally prevent much of the irregularity into which we are apt to be betrayed by the impetuoſity of our paſſions. By this means we may have the fear of God always before our eyes, and walk with God all the day long. By this means we may go through the buſineſs of the day with greater pleaſure, in humble expectation that, while we thus acknowledge God in all our ways, he will direct our paths, and make every thing that befalls us ſubſervient to our real good. And, laſtly, your children and ſervants, ſeeing you regular

regular and devout in the performance of this duty, cannot fail to conceive a greater reverence for religion; and by this means its ſanctions, and the obligations of virtue in general, will have a ſtronger influence over them as long as they live. I may add, that you yourſelves will appear more reſpectable in their eſteem, and your authority will have greater weight on that account.

Every family is ſo much a ſeparate and independent ſociety, that no argument can be produced for *public worſhip* of any kind, that will not even more ſtrongly enforce *family worſhip*. The connection between members of the ſame family is cloſer, and more intimate, than the connection between the members of the ſame political ſociety, and the ſubjects of the ſame civil government. They are naturally more united both in intereſt, and affection. A family, therefore, being ſo much one perſon, the obligation to family worſhip approaches to the obligation

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of private devotion. Moreover, the members of the ſame family, having ſuch intimate intercourſe, and ſo many things in common, have, conſequently, many relative and reciprocal duties; and the ſenſe and obligation of all theſe muſt be greatly ſtrengthened by joint prayer.

The difficulties attending the performance of this duty appear to me to be ſuch, as might eaſily be ſurmounted, by men who are not altogether deſtitute of firmneſs of mind, and whoſe conduct in life would be no reproach to the forms of rational devotion. The ſervice itſelf, when conducted with propriety, is a decent, and becoming thing, nor does it need to take up much time. Long prayers, we know, were particularly objected to by our Lord himſelf; and, in all caſes, the benefit of the exerciſe muſt be derived from the propriety, and the fervour of our devotions, and not from the length of them. If it be inconvenient for the family to aſſemble for this purpoſe *twice*

every day, particularly in the morning, let it be done in the evening, after the buſineſs of the day is over. To avoid oſtentation, which is ſo hateful in religion, it may be deferred till any company that do not ſpend the night in the family be gone home; or if it be omitted occaſionally, ſtill let it be done whenever nothing extraordinary prevents it, and when the family can be alone. The real good effect of family devotion will not be ſenſibly leſſened by thoſe omiſſions and interruptions, which are either caſual, or are evidently made to avoid the appearance of oſtentation.

After all, I do not expect that I ſhall be able to recommend this duty to thoſe who give into the gaities of this luxurious and diſſipated age. It will not ſuit with a maſter of a family being much from home, with his generally keeping bad hours, and much leſs bad and rakiſh company. It is a ſerious thing, but it ought to be remembered, that we come into the world

world upon very ſerious buſineſs, and muſt give a ſerious account of the manner in which we acquit ourſelves in it.

Religion, my brethren, is the great buſineſs of our lives. Our abode in this world is ſhort and precarious. In the beautiful and expreſſive language of the ſcriptures, *We have here no continuing city*, and are only *ſtrangers and pilgrims on the earth*; but we are to be ſome where elſe for ever, and our happineſs or miſery in a future and unknown ſtate of being depends upon our behaviour here. In this ſituation, it is certainly our wiſdom, *in this our day, to mind the things that relate to our everlaſting peace and welfare, before they are for ever hid from our eyes.* If you be laughed at for the appearance of decent and rational devotion, conſider who they are that ridicule you on this account, and of how ſhort continuance, and of what little moment, is the *laughter of fools.* The beginning of any new, though laudable practice, may require ſome degree of

courage; but the exertion of that courage is virtue, and it is glorious for a man to be ſingular in that which is good.

According to the maxims of the preſent age, it is poſſible, that even for the common decencies of religion, you may be cenſured by ſome, as preciſe, and righteous over much; and you may paſs for men of no ſpirit or taſte; but conſider the time is coming, when many of our preſent notions and maxims will vaniſh like a dream; when he only will be accounted a man of true ſpirit, to have acquired a juſt ſenſe of honour, and to have formed himſelf to a juſt method of thinking and acting, who has had the reſolution to ſubdue his paſſions, who has had the fortitude to reſiſt the ſolicitations of bad company, and the ſteadineſs to act a wiſe, moderate, and virtuous part through life; whereas he who has ſuffered his vain mind to be carried away by the current maxims of a licentious age, who has ſuffered himſelf to be ſeduced by the artifi-

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ces of his vicious and profligate companions, who could not ſtand the ſhock of ridicule and reproach, but has been laughed and bantered out of his virtue, will be ranked among the meaneſt, the moſt abject, and contemptible of all wretches. And this day, which will try every man's work what it is, and ſhew who have acted the truely ſenſible, wiſe, and ſpirited part, is not far off; for after *death* comes the *judgement*; and what is our *life*, *it is even as a vapour, which appears for a little time, and then vaniſhes away.*

I ſhall cloſe this addreſs with a few paſſages ſelected from various parts of the ſcriptures, expreſſing the duties of maſters with reſpect to their families.

Gen. xviii. 19. *I know him* (ſays God concerning Abraham) *that he will command his children, and his houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord, to do juſtice and judgement.*

Deut. vi. 6, 7. *And theſe words which I command thee this day ſhall be in thine heart, and thou ſhalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and ſhalt talk of them when thou ſitteſt in thine houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the way, and when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up.*

Joſhua xxiv. 15. *As for me, and my houſe* (ſaith Joſhua) *we will ſerve the Lord.*

Pſalm ci. 2, &c. *I will behave myſelf wiſely in a perfect way. I will walk within my houſe with a perfect heart. Mine eyes ſhall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me. He that walketh in a perfect way he ſhall ſerve me. He that worketh deceit ſhall not dwell within my houſe, he that telleth lies ſhall not tarry in my ſight.*

Job xxxi. 13—15. *If I did deſpiſe the cauſe of my man-ſervant or of my maid-ſervant, when they contended with me. What then ſhall I do when God riſeth up; and when*

when he viſiteth, what ſhall I anſwer him? Did not he that made me in the womb, make him; and did not one faſhion us in the womb?

Coloſſ. iv. 1.—Eph. vi. 9. *Maſters give unto your ſervants that which is juſt and equal, knowing that ye alſo have a maſter in heaven, and there is no reſpect of perſons with him.*

Prov. xxii. 6.—xiii. 24. *Train up a child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. He that ſpareth his rod hateth his ſon, but he that loveth him chaſteneth him betimes.*

Eph. vi. 4. *Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

To aſſiſt you in the proper conduct of family prayer, I ſhall ſubjoin a few forms compoſed for that purpoſe, with the addition of *ſhorter forms* for ſome particular

occaſions, which may be introduced when they are found to be expedient.

As it will ſeldom be convenient to read more than one chapter at once on theſe occaſions, I would adviſe, that, in general, choice be made of the *four goſpels*, the *book of Acts*, and *the practical parts of the apoſtolical epiſtles*. Theſe contain what is moſt fundamental and uſeful in chriſtian knowledge, and in them the great duties of the chriſtian life are inculcated with clearneſs and energy. Several of the *Pſalms* may alſo be read with peculiar advantage at theſe devotional exerciſes.

PRAYERS

PRAYERS FOR FAMILIES.

The First Prayer.

ALmighty and moſt merciful God, we thy dependent creatures preſent ourſelves before thee, under a deep ſenſe of our manifold obligations to thee, as our maker, preſerver, and benefactor. Thou art he who haſt made us, and not we ourſelves. We are the workmanſhip of thine hands, what thine own fingers have framed; and we are curiouſly and wonderfully made, every

part of our bodies bearing evident marks of thine infinite wiſdom and goodneſs. More eſpecially do we rejoice in the rank which thou haſt been pleaſed that we ſhould hold in thy creation, as rational and immortal beings, and thank thee for thoſe powers whereby we are capable of attaining to the knowledge of thee our God, and of underſtanding and doing thy holy will.

We thank thee for all thy goodneſs to us in this life, and that the earth, which thou haſt given us to inhabit, is ſo full of the riches of thy goodneſs. We thank thee for the bread that we eat, for the raiment with which we are cloathed, for the bleſſings of ſociety and friendſhip, and for every thing that contributes to make our ſituation in this world comfortable and happy. But, above all, do we thank thee for the

the revelation of thy will to mankind, in order to recover men from that ſtate of vice and miſery into which they were fallen, and for the gracious promiſes thou haſt made us, by thy ſon Jeſus Chriſt, of the free forgiveneſs of all our ſins, of a reſurrection from the dead, and a life of immortal happineſs in a future ſtate, if we repent of what we have done amiſs, and endeavour to live according to the precepts of his goſpel.

We are ſenſible that in many things we have all broken thy holy and righteous laws, ſo as juſtly to have incurred thy diſpleaſure; but do thou, we humbly intreat thee, according to thy abundant mercy declared to mankind in the goſpel of thy ſon, blot out all our tranſgreſſions, and receive us into thy divine favour; and may we be enabled, from the motives of

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our holy religion, to walk more circumſpectly and unblameably before thee for the time to come.

May we love thee, the Lord our God, with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourſelves, doing to others as we would that they ſhould do to us; and may we in all things live righteouſly, ſoberly, and godly in this preſent evil world.

In a faithful and chearful endeavour to diſcharge this our duty, and to preſerve our conſciences void of offence ſo long as we ſhall live; may we be enabled, according to thy gracious encouragement, to caſt all our cares upon thee who careſt for us, depending upon thy promiſe, that if we, in the firſt place, ſecure that good part which can never be taken from us, all other things ſhall be added unto us; and that, after having ſeen thy goodneſs

goodneſs in the land of the living, when we ſhall have fought the good fight of faith, and finiſhed our chriſtian courſe with joy, an abundant entrance will be adminiſtered unto us into the everlaſting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

[*In this place may any of the* occaſional forms *be introduced.*]

Hear us, Almighty God, in theſe our requeſts, as the diſciples of thy ſon Chriſt Jeſus, through whom to thee, O Father, be glory for ever. *Amen.*

The SECOND PRAYER.

ALmighty God and heavenly Father, we adore thee as the greateſt and beſt of all beings, intitled to the higheſt reverence, love, and confidence of all thy rational creatures.

creatures. Thou art the maker and preſerver of all things. Thou ſpakeſt and it was done, thou commandedſt and all things ſtood faſt, and they ſtill continue according to thy firſt wiſe appointment, for all are thy ſervants. As thou haſt made all things, ſo thou haſt abundantly provided for the ſupply of all the wants of thy creatures. They all have their eyes up unto thee, and thou openeſt thine hand, and ſatisfieſt the deſire of every living thing.

We alſo have largely ſhared thy bounty; yet, with ſhame and confuſion of face, we acknowledge, that the God in whoſe hand our breath is, and whoſe are all our ways, have we not glorified. In many things we offend all. Shouldeſt thou be ſtrict to mark iniquity, O Lord, who could ſtand! But it is our happineſs to have

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to do with a God who is merciful and gracious, long ſuffering, abundant in mercy, and goodneſs, and truth; who is not willing that any ſhould periſh, but had rather that all ſhould repent and live.

Being encouraged, in the goſpel of thy ſon Jeſus Chriſt, to expect the free forgiveneſs of all our ſins, upon our ſincere repentance, we would reſolve, that wherein we are now convinced we have hitherto done amiſs, we will, for the future, do ſo no more, and endeavour to walk in all the commandments of God blameleſs. Do thou aſſiſt us to fulfil theſe our reſolutions; and leſt the cares of this world ſhould overpower the good motions of our minds, may we ever have preſent to our thoughts the moſt important motives to a virtuous life and converſation. In a more eſpecial manner,

manner, may we live under a ſtrong ſenſe of thine univerſal preſence; and while we conſider that thine eyes are in every place, beholding both the evil and the good; that thou knoweſt even the thoughts of our hearts (for that all things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do) and that, as thou now ſeeſt in ſecret, thou wilt one day reward openly, may we keep the ſtricteſt watch over our thoughts, our words, and our actions; and may no temptation ſeduce us from the path of our known duty.

Profeſſing ourſelves to be the diſciples of Chriſt, may we make his inſtructions the rule of our lives, and carefully copy after his great example; that we, like him, may he holy, harmleſs and undefiled, intent upon fulfilling the will of him who ſends

us into this world, and finiſhing his work; and maintaining a perfect reſignation to thy righteous will in all the events of life. Being chriſtians, may we conſider that, like our Lord and Maſter, we are not of this world. May we, therefore, as ſtrangers and pilgrims on earth, be endeavouring to raiſe our affections from all things here below, that we may have our treaſure in heaven, from whence alſo we look for a ſaviour, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall change theſe our mortal bodies, and faſhion them like to his own glorified body, in that day when corruption ſhall put on incorruption, and this mortal be ſwallowed up of immortality. Animated by this glorious hope, ſet before us in the goſpel of thy ſon, may it be our daily endeavour to abſtain from all the corruptions of this world, and to cultivate that holineſs of heart and life,

life, without which no man can ſee the Lord.

[*In this place may any of the* occaſional forms *be introduced.*]

Theſe our petitions we humbly offer up to thee as the diſciples of thy ſon Jeſus Chriſt, who has taught us when we pray to ſay,

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our treſpaſſes, as we forgive them that treſpaſs againſt us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

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The THIRD PRAYER.

ALmighty God, and moſt merciful father! the maker, preſerver, and governor of all things; who neglecteſt nothing that thou haſt made. In thy hand is the life of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind. Thou giveſt food unto all fleſh; and we obſerve, with admiration, the ſuitable proviſion thou haſt made for the ſupport and comfort of all thy wanting creatures.

We deſire to be, at all times, very ſenſible of, and to rejoice in our own ſtate of dependance on thee; for we alſo are the work of thy hands, and under the care of thy providence. May we never fail to glorify thee, in whoſe

whoſe hand our life and breath are, and whoſe are all our ways.

Deeply impreſſed with this conviction, we deſire to unite in grateful acknowledgments of thy manifold and great benefits to us. We praiſe thee for the gift, and preſervation of life; for the wonderful and uſeful frame of our bodies, for the excellence and ſoundneſs of the capacities of our minds, for that meaſure of health which thy good providence continueth to us, and for the many comforts which flow from thence. We thank thee for a daily ſupply of many things needful for our ſupport and conducive to our delight.

We gratefully acknowledge the kindneſs of thy providence in all the comforts and ſervices we derive from ſociety,

ſociety, neighbourhood, and friendſhip; for the daily endearments of relative affections, and the good offices reſulting from our domeſtic connections one with another, and alſo for the ſecurity to our perſons and properties; together with the other manifold and great advantages we enjoy by means of our ſituation in this land of religious and civil liberty, and of the protection of the equitable conſtitution and good government under which we live. Surely, the lines are fallen to us in pleaſant places, and we have a goodly heritage. Bleſſed be the Lord, who hath ſhewn us ſo largely of his goodneſs in the land of the living.

But, above all, would we praiſe thee, with our whole hearts, for thy great mercy manifeſted to mankind by thy ſon Chriſt Jeſus; whom thou

thou haſt given, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life. We thank thee for the heavenly inſtructions, the holy precepts, and the exceeding great and precious promiſes delivered to us in the goſpel. We thank thee for the benefits of our Lord's excellent and perſuaſive doctrines; his amiable and perfect pattern; his plain and profitable inſtitutions, his exemplary obedience, even unto death; his glorious reſurrection, which is a pattern and aſſurance of that reſurrection which he hath promiſed to us; and for his triumphant aſcenſion, now to appear in the preſence of God for us. Having ſuch an high-prieſt over the houſe of God, we would at all times draw near to thee, our Father in heaven, with pure hearts, in full aſſurance of faith; believing that thou art a bountiful rewarder of all them that diligently ſeek thee.

May

May it be the earneſt deſire of our hearts, and our continual endeavour, to walk worthy of the holy vocation wherewith we are called, as the children of thee, our God and Father, and the diſciples of thy holy and beloved ſon Chriſt Jeſus. To which end diſpoſe us diligently to read and conſider, and enable us to underſtand the word of thy truth, eſpecially, the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus. May we receive the good ſeed of thy heavenly word in the love of it, cheriſh it in good and honeſt hearts, and bring forth the proper fruits of it in all holy diſpoſitions, and a ſober, righteous and godly converſation.

Incline us to reverence and love thee above all things; to maintain a continual regard to thine authority and inſpection over us; to rejoice in our dependance on thy government;

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to be ſatisfied with thy diſpoſals; thankful for thy mercies, patient under thy corrections, confiding in thy promiſes, that all things ſhall work together for good to them that love thee. In all the events and employments of life may we ſet thee, the Lord, always before us; making thy perfections our confidence, thy precepts our counſellors, thy promiſes the rejoicing of our hearts, and the hope of thine acceptance, and of glory, honour and immortality in thy heavenly kingdom, our animating motives to a patient continuance in all well-doing. And, O! that there may be ſuch an heart in us, that we may fear thee, and keep all thy commandments always, that it may be well with us.

Aſſiſt us to cheriſh all kinds and good affections towards all men; and to ſuppreſs

ſuppreſs and root out of our hearts all bitterneſs, envy, hatred, malice and all uncharitableneſs. Enable us to maintain, at all times, truth in our words, ſincerity in our profeſſions, faithfulneſs to our engagements, and integrity and righteouſneſs in all our dealings. Whatſoever we would that men ſhould do unto us, may we do even ſo unto them, in ſerious expectation of thy righteous judgment, wherein there will be no reſpect of perſons.

Animate us with a ſpirit of unconfined love and good-will, that we may be ready to do good and to communicate, as we have ability and opportunity, to whomſoever we can ſerve or oblige. Eſpecially may we never fail in ſincere gratitude to our friends and benefactors; and as we hope, that thou, our moſt merciful

father, wilt forgive us our ſins, if we be penitent, may we alſo, from the heart, forgive thoſe who have offended, or injured us, when they turn to us; in the mean time guarding againſt malice, and forbearing revenge. May we be always ready to perform with chearfulneſs all good offices towards our neighbours and acquaintance; and, if it pleaſe thee, make us inſtruments of thy gracious providence for real benefits to thoſe among whom we dwell.

We farther beſeech thee, O moſt pure and holy God, the father of our ſpirits, to enable us to purify ourſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, and to perfect holineſs in thy fear. May we continually preſerve a due government over our affections and paſſions, be watchful againſt all pride, vain-glory and hypocriſy, and

ſuppreſs

ſuppreſs all fooliſh opinions and hurtful luſts. May we regulate our ſpirits by humility and meekneſs, keep our bodies in purity and temperance, and uſe the good things of this world as not abuſing them; but ſo, as that we may give a good account of them to our own reflections, and to the final judge. May we be prudent and circumſpect in our conduct, contented in our lot, induſtrious in our callings, and both in our preſent and every future ſtation of life, maintain conſciences void of offence towards God and towards man; that we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

May we at all times conſider ſeriouſly, and feel the powerful influences of the proſpects ſet before us by the goſpel of thy ſon Jeſus. Firmly perſuaded of the truth of all thy promiſes delivered

by him, may we behave as pilgrims and ſtrangers upon earth, where we have no continuing city; but ſeek for a better country, even an heavenly one, a city which hath foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God. May the ſupreme deſires of our hearts, and our unwearied endeavours, concur with the methods of thy providence and grace, to complete our meetneſs for the inheritance prepared for us.

Finally, O thou father of all the families upon earth, we commit ourſelves unto thee in our domeſtic capacity and family relations. Be thou the guardian of our common intereſts; beſtow upon us all needful ſupplies and bleſſings, and protect us from real evil. Aſſiſt us all to diſcharge the duties we ſeverally owe one to another, as the ſervants of God

our common maſter in heaven. With kind affections one towards another may we mutually ſhare in proſperity and adverſity, and be helpful one to another in every temporal and eternal intereſt. May we live in love and peace, and may the God of love and peace dwell with us; and, in the end, make us all ſharers in eternal life and happineſs, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Now unto him who is able to keep us from falling, and to preſent us faultleſs before the preſence of his glory with exceeding joy; to the only wiſe God, our Saviour, be glory and majeſty, dominion and power, now and ever. *Amen.*

FORMS

FOR

PARTICULAR OCCASIONS,

To be uſed at the Diſcretion of the Perſon who conducts the Service.

1. To be uſed in the Morning.

WE thank thee, heavenly father, for thy care over us the laſt night, that we were preſerved from diſagreeable accidents in the hours of ſleep, and that we are brought to ſee the light of another day in ſuch comfortable circumſtances. May we be in thy fear all the day long, and may this fear be an effectual reſtraint upon us, that we commit no ſin or folly.

2. To be uſed in the Evening.

WE thank thee, heavenly father, for thy goodneſs to us this day paſt. Through thy good hand upon us we continue hitherto; and we commit ourſelves to thy care and protection this approaching night. May thy good providence be our guard, from all the dangers to which we are expoſed in the defenceleſs hours of repoſe; and make us to awake in the morning, rejoicing in thy goodneſs, and refreſhed with moderate reſt, for the diſcharge of the duties of the day enſuing.

3. To be uſed on Sundays.

BLESS, we intreat thee, moſt merciful father, our attendance on the public worſhip of chriſtians this day. We thank thee for the oppor-

tunity we enjoy of worſhipping thee according to the dictates of our conſciences, without any to moleſt us, or make us afraid. May we be careful to improve this great privilege in the beſt manner. May thy word, which we read, and which is explained to us, be a light to our feet, and a lamp unto our path. May it enter deep into our hearts, and bring forth fruit in our future lives and converſations. When, upon theſe occaſions, we join with our fellow creatures, and fellow chriſtians, in one common addreſs to thee, the father of our ſpirits, expreſſing our joint ſentiments, deſires, and expectations, do thou hear in heaven, and grant us an anſwer of peace. And by worſhipping thee here below, with reverence and godly fear, may our minds be formed for the delightful exerciſes and enjoyments of a future world.

4. For

4. For Relations, &c.

BLESS, we intreat thee, heavenly father, all our relations, our friends, neighbours, and acquaintance. May we ſo live together in thy fear, in a mutual intercourſe of good and kind offices, and a regard for each other's beſt intereſts; that when we have been ſeparated by death, we may meet again in thy glorious and everlaſting kingdom; where we ſhall be happy in the enjoyment of thee our God, and of each other, to all eternity.

5. For Perſons of different Conditions in Life.

CONSIDERING this world as a ſtate of trial and probation, may we cultivate thoſe virtues which our ſituation and circumſtances peculiarly re-

quire, and learn wiſdom and inſtruction from all the diſpenſations of thy providence. If we be rich in this word, may we conſider every thing we enjoy as the gift of thy bounty, and endeavour to be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate, laying up for ourſelves a good foundation for the time to come. If it ſeem good to thy wiſe and righteous providence, that we be poor in this world, may we be humble and induſtrious; rich in faith, and heirs of an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in heaven for us.

6. For Perſons of different Ages.

TEACH thoſe who are young to remember thee their creator in the days of their youth, to avoid the ſnares of bad company, and to employ the morning of their life in acquiring that knowledge

knowledge and virtue, which may make them uſeful members of ſociety, and fill them with pleaſing reflections when they come to die. Bleſs the aged. Support their minds under the decays of nature, that as their outward man grows weaker and weaker, their inward man may grow ſtronger and ſtronger; till, in thy due time, they obtain their diſmiſſion from the infirmities and troubles of this mortal life, and be admitted to the joys of thine heavenly and everlaſting kingdom.

7. For Huſbands and Wives.

MAY thoſe who are engaged in the conjugal relation live in perfect love and harmony. May all their thoughts and actions tend to advance their common intereſt and happineſs. May they walk before their houſe in a perfect way, be examples of ſobriety, and every virtue, to their dependents;

and

and having faithfully diſcharged all the important duties of the family relation on earth, may they be admitted members of the great family of thy children in heaven.

8. For Parents and Children.

TEACH parents, by a proper mixture of gentleneſs and ſeverity, to train up their children in the paths of wiſdom and virtue, and thereby to make the beſt proviſion for their temporal and eternal welfare. And may children be taught to honour and obey their parents, and be the comfort and ſupport of their age, in return for the obligations conferred upon them in their early years.

9. For Maſters and Servants.

INCLINE the hearts of maſters not to rule with rigour, but to give

to their ſervants that which is juſt and equal, remembering that they alſo have a maſter in heaven, with whom there is no reſpect of perſons. And may ſervants be obedient unto their maſters, not with eye-ſervice, as men-pleaſers, but in ſingleneſs of heart, fearing God; knowing that whatever good thing any man doth, the ſame ſhall he receive, whether he be bound or free.

10. For Perſons under Affliction in general.

SANCTIFY to us, heavenly father, the afflictive diſpenſation of thy providence, with which thou haſt viſited us. We bleſs thy name, that, in the midſt of judgment, thou rememberеſt mercy, and afflicteſt us leſs than our iniquities deſerve. We would endeavour to humble ourſelves under thy mighty

mighty hand, and to learn patience and obedience by the things which we ſuffer. By all the viciſſitudes of this mortal life, may we learn to raiſe our affections from all things here below, and be taught to look for our chief portion and happineſs in a future and better world. If it be thy pleaſure, remove this ſtroke from us, that we may again rejoice in thy goodneſs, and bleſs thy name.

11. A Thankſgiving for the Removal of Affliction in general.

WE thank thee, heavenly father, for the favour thou haſt ſhewn to this family, in removing the afflictions under which we laboured. What ſhall we render to thee the God of our mercies, who crowneſt our lives with thy goodneſs! Bleſs the Lord O our ſouls, and all that is within us bleſs his

his holy name. Write upon our hearts a law of love and gratitude, and may our lives be devoted to thy service.

12. In case of dangerous Sickness.

DO thou, our most merciful God and father, who art a present help in time of trouble, and who hast, in thy word, particularly encouraged those who are afflicted to pray, have compassion on thy *servant*, on whom thou hast laid thine afflictive hand. Thou sayest to diseases, Go, and they go; Come, and they come, to answer the wise and gracious purposes of thy providence. If it be thy pleasure, restore thy *servant* to *his* health, and a capacity of usefulness in life. But, above all, do thou fit *him*, and all of us who are concerned for *him*, for thy holy will;

will; and whatever be the iſſue, may all theſe afflictions, which are but for a moment, be a means of working out for us a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory, by making us to look not ſo much at the things which are ſeen, and temporary, as at thoſe things which are unſeen and eternal.

13. A Thankſgiving for Recovery from Sickneſs.

WE join with thy *ſervant* in returning thee thanks for the great mercy thou haſt ſhown to *him*, in *his* recovery from a dangerous diſorder. May a grateful ſenſe of this thy goodneſs deeply impreſs *his* mind, and all our minds; and may *his* life which thou haſt ſpared, and may our lives, which thou preſerveſt by the watchful care of thy providence over us, be devoted to thy ſervice.

14. To,

14. To be uſed after the Death of a Relation, or, in the Time of great Sickneſs and Mortality in the Neighbourhood.

DO thou, who haſt, in great wiſdom and juſtice, appointed unto all men once to die; who haſt ſaid to the children of men, Duſt ye are, and to duſt ye ſhall return; grant that when we ſee this aweful ſentence put in execution; when we attend our friends, relations, and acquaintance, to their laſt and ſilent habitations, we may be ſeriouſly reminded of our own mortality; and conſidering the uncertainty, as well as the ſhortneſs of our abode in this world; conſidering that we cannot tell what a day or an hour may bring forth, that, perhaps, even this very night our ſouls may be required of us, may we be excited to

uſe

uſe all diligence in working the work of God while it is day, knowing that the night of death comes (and may ſurpriſe us) in which no man can work: for there is no work or deviſe, or knowledge, or wiſdom, in the grave, whither we are haſting.

Duly influenced by theſe conſiderations, may we be enabled to live the life of the righteous, that ſo our latter end may be like his, full of hope and joy. Having retained our integrity ſo long as we live, at the hour of death may not our hearts reproach us; but on leaving this world, may we be able to ſing the chriſtian triumphant ſong, O death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory? and finally, when we, with the reſt of mankind, ſhall ſtand before thy righteous tribunal at the laſt day, may we hear this joyful ſentence pronounced upon us,

Well

Well done, good and faithful ſervants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord.

15. To be uſed before a Journey.

DO thou, who preſerveſt man and beaſt, protect thy *ſervant*, who is undertaking a journey, from all the dangers to which *he* may be expoſed in the courſe of it. Teach *him* to acknowledge thee in all *his* ways, do thou direct *his* paths, and cauſe *him* to return in health and ſafety to *his* family and friends.

16. A Thankſgiving after a Return from a Journey.

WE join with thy *ſervant* in returning thee thanks, for preſerving *him* from all the dangers to which *he* has been expoſed in a journey, and for reſtoring *him* to *his* family and friends

friends in health and ſafety. While we rejoice in thy goodneſs on this account, may we be careful to expreſs the ſenſe we have of our obligation to thee, by a ſuitable life and converſation.

17. To be uſed before a Voyage.

DO thou, who ſayeſt to the ſea, Be calm, and its waves obey thy commandment, preſerve thy *ſervant*, who is undertaking a voyage, from the dangers to which *he* will be expoſed on that unſtable element; and give *his* friends an opportunity of rejoicing with *him*, and praiſing thy name, on *his* ſafe return.

18. To be uſed after a Voyage.

WE thank thee, Lord of heaven and earth, who raiſeſt, and ſtilleſt the waves of the ſea, that thou haſt graciouſly

graciouſly preſerved thy *ſervant* from the dangers to which *he* has been expoſed in *his* voyage. May *he* be duly ſenſible of *his* obligation to thee, the author of all good, and live to thy praiſe.

19. For a Woman near the Time of Delivery.

MAY thy favour and bleſſing attend thy handmaid, who is expecting the painful hour of child-birth. Bring her to her proper time, and make joy and gladneſs ſucceed to anxiety and pain.

20. A Thankſgiving after a ſafe Delivery.

WE join with thine handmaid, in returning thee thanks, for delivering her in the perilous hour of childbearing, and making her the living mother

mother of a living and perfect child. Do thou perfect her recovery, and may a ſenſe of this thy great goodneſs to her deeply impreſs her mind, and all our minds. May thy ſervants be enabled to educate their child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and may it live to be the joy of its parents, and a bleſſing to ſociety.

21. Another Form, to be uſed when the Child is dead.

WE join with thine handmaid in returning thee thanks, for delivering her in the perilous hour of childbearing, though it hath ſeemed good to thy wiſe providence not to ſpare the life of the child. Sanctify the affliction. Perfect the recovery of thy ſervant, and may a ſenſe of this thy goodneſs deeply impreſs her mind, and all our minds.

22. For

22. For the whole World.

DO thou, who art the father of all the families of the earth, extend thy compaſſion to all our brethren of mankind. May the great bleſſings of thy ſon's goſpel be univerſally diffuſed. Purify chriſtian churches from every thing that debaſes their religion, and obſtructs its efficacy on the minds of men; and may it finally prevail, to the extirpation of idolatry, Mohammedan deluſion, and Popiſh ſuperſtition. May thine antient people the Jews be at length brought within the pale of the church of Chriſt, together with the fulneſs of the Gentiles; that, in thy due time, all thy rational offspring may be worſhippers of thee, the only living and true God, by Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.

23. For our Country.

SHEW thy favour to this land of our nativity, the kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, and all our colonies and plantations abroad. Pardon our many ſins, which might juſtly bring down upon us thy heavy judgments. Promote the great work of reformation among all ranks and degrees of men among us; and may we continue to be a people highly favoured of thee our God, in conſequence of our being to thee a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Bleſs thy ſervant our ſovereign king George. Eſtabliſh his throne in righteouſneſs, and may the preſent reigning family be the inſtruments, in thy hands, of continuing to us our invaluable liberties civil and religious. Bleſs the queen, and every branch of the royal family,

family, and make them as eminent for their princely virtues and accompliſhments, as they are for their high ſtations in life. Give peace in our times, O Lord, or grant ſucceſs to our arms, in every juſt and neceſſary war. May our manufactures and commerce flouriſh. May we have proper weather for bringing to perfection, and for gathering in the fruits of the earth. Thus may our poor be ſatisfied with bread; and while we live in the enjoyment of every temporal bleſſing, may we not abuſe thy goodneſs by indulging to luxury and exceſs, but may we expreſs our gratitude to thee, the giver of all good, by the temperate and generous uſe of all our bleſſings.

24. For the Parliament and the King's Miniſters.

BLESS, O Lord, we intreat thee, the great council of the nation, and make all their conſultations to iſſue in the public good. May thoſe who are intruſted with the conduct of national affairs be endowed with wiſdom and integrity, proper for their important ſtations. Succeed their juſt and good deſigns, and overrule all their meaſures for the real good of this people.

7 AP 66

THE INDEX.

Page

THE First Prayer, —— 25
The Second Prayer, —— 29
The Third Prayer, —— —— 35

OCCASIONAL FORMS.

1. To be uſed in the Morning, — 46
2. To be uſed in the Evening, — 47
3. To be uſed on Sundays, —— 47
4. For Relations, &c. —— 49
5. For Perſons of different Conditions in Life, —— —— 49
6. For Perſons of different Ages, — 50
7. For Huſbands and Wives, —— 51
8. For Parents and Children, — 52
9. For Maſters and Servants, —— 53
10. For Perſons under Affliction in general, —— —— 53
11. A Thankſgiving for the Removal of Afflictions in general, — — 54
12. In

THE INDEX.

Page

12. In caſe of dangerous Sickneſs, — 55
13. A Thanſgiving for Recovery from Sickneſs, ——— ——— 56
14. To be uſed after the Death of a Relation, or, in the Time of great Sickneſs and Mortality in the Neighbourhood, ——— ——— 47
15. To be uſed before a Journey, — 59
16. A Thankſgiving after a Return from a Journey ——— — 59
17. To be uſed before a Voyage, — 60
18. To be uſed after a Voyage, — 60
19. For a Woman near the Time of Delivery, ——— ——— 61
20. A Thankſgiving after a ſafe Delivery, ——— ——— — 61
21. Another Form to be uſed when the Child is dead, ——— 62
22. For the whole World, —— 63
23. For our Country, — — — 64
24. For the Parliament and the King's Miniſters, —— — —— 66

7 AP 66

THE END.